

KEWEENAW NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK ADVISORY COMMISSION

Minutes of the meeting, March 2, 1999

Present: Commissioners -

Kathryn Eckert, Advisor, National Trust for Michigan

John Garber, the Village of Calumet

Reverend Robert Langseth, representing the Houghton County

Board of Commissioners

Larry Lankton, Michigan Technological University

Paul Lehto, Supervisor, Calumet Township

Tom Nemacheck, representing Governor John Engler

Clyde Raasio, representing Quincy and Franklin Townships

National Park Service -

Lynn Bjorkman, Community Planner

Frank Fiala, KNHP Superintendent

Recording Secretary -

Lisa Dwyer, Michigan Technological University

Absent: Joseph Balachowski, Historical Architect

Call to Order

A regular meeting of the Keweenaw National Historical Park Advisory Commission was held Tuesday, March 2, 1999, at 8:30 a.m. in Calumet, Michigan, at Park Headquarters.

Approval of Agenda

The agenda was approved after corrections to the dates for the March meeting and today's meeting were made. Today's meeting date is March 2, 1999 and the date of the next commission meeting is Tuesday, June 8, 1999.

Review of Minutes

The minutes of the October 27, 1998, meeting were approved on motion by Reverend Langseth and seconded by Larry Lankton.

Superintendent's Report

Frank Fiala asked for a moment of silence in memory of Clarence Dwyer, former Advisory Commission member who recently passed away.

Fiala asked for nominations for Chair of the Advisory Commission. John Garber nominated Paul Lehto. Larry Lankton seconded the motion. No other nominations were made. Motion carried with unanimous support that Paul Lehto be named Chair of the Advisory Commission.

Fiala presented a bell to the Advisory Commission suggesting that it be used to "ring in and ring out," future commission meetings. He explained the significance of the bell, saying the C&H Board of Directors had used it the only time the board held a meeting in Calumet in 1942.

Loose-leaf binders containing copies of all of the minutes from past Advisory Commission meetings, the charter, the park's legislation, and other correspondence pertaining to park activities were distributed to the commissioners. Fiala suggested that the commissioners place all future minutes and correspondence pertinent to the park in their binders.

Fiala gave an update on the budget outlook and distributed copies of the KNHP FY 1999 budget.

The total program funding is \$629,063. Fiala said that of the \$200,000 increase in the FY99 budget, \$196,500 went back into projects in the local communities. This type of situation may not happen next year, according to Fiala, because he intends on hiring more staff. Administrative officer, Lois Winkvist, who works for Isle Royal National Park, is now also working part-time for KNHP. She will become full-time with KNHP as soon as IRNP fills a budget officer position in their office. Fiala also hopes to have an interpretive position filled next year.

Fiala distributed copies of two briefing statements in preparation for the FY 2000 budget. One statement is to activate the operating powers of the Advisory Commission. The other is for the acquisition of four key historic properties within the Calumet Unit of the park. The statements will be submitted for the Appropriations Subcommittee Hearings in Washington, D.C.

Fiala distributed copies of the Michigan Historic Preservation Network press release announcing that Governor John Engler has signed into law legislation that will provide state residents with tax incentives for restoring historically significant homes, commercial buildings, farms, barns, and other properties.

Fiala provided the commissioners with a packet of correspondence dating from March 1998 to February 1999. It covers the issue of non-compliance by the City of Hancock with the Memorandum of Agreement in connection with the city's improvements within the Quincy Mining Company Historic Landmark District. KNHP alleges that the City of Hancock has authorized and is participating in the construction of the extension of First Avenue without proper consultation with the park and Quincy Township. According to Fiala, construction activities have already damaged historical sites within the Quincy area. He added that if those park resources are compromised, then the integrity of the park disappears and the question arises regarding the legitimacy of the park. Reverend Langseth made a motion to celebrate the heightened awareness of historical preservation that is required in the community and to support the superintendent's efforts to encourage that. Larry Lankton seconded it. Motion carried.

Historical Architect's Report

Fiala reported for Josef Balachowski, who was out of town attending a workshop. Balachowski has been working on plans for the relocation of the Seaman Mineral Museum to the Blacksmith Shop and the Machine Shop on Quincy Hill. He is working on architectural drawings for the Keweenaw Heritage Center at St. Anne's. He is beginning a guideline process that is going to be used in accordance with the historic preservation ordinance that is being done in Calumet Village and Calumet Township.

Community Planner's Report

Lynn Bjorkman reported that she has been working on historic district development. The Village of Calumet recently formed a Historic District Study Committee. A contract was made with Jane Busch, an historic preservation consultant, who then came and worked with Bjorkman and the Study Committee to begin compiling a report for the committee that will serve as the legal basis for a historic district for the downtown Calumet area. Busch also worked with Calumet Township, which has already adopted a historic district ordinance, but has not designated a district, yet. Fiala added that he'd like to thank Lynn Bjorkman and Joseph Mihal for the many hours they both spent working with Jane Busch while she was here.

Reports and Comments from the Commissioners

Larry Lankton spoke of the poor rock piles that are being depleted or disappearing because the material is being used for various purposes. This activity is altering the historic landscape substantially and destroying its historic integrity. At a previous Advisory Commission meeting a decision was made to develop a position for the commissioners to take regarding the depletion of the

poor rock piles. A copy of a draft statement written by Larry Lankton and Kathryn Eckert was distributed. Lankton said he is not interested in saving all of the poor rock piles, but mainly such places as areas adjacent to the Quincy and Calumet units of the park, and other historical landmark districts. It was suggested that an inventory be done on the poor rock piles in order to set some sort of priorities. It was suggested that students from Michigan Tech could take on such a project as this. Fiala suggested that it might be possible for the park to hire a student to do the poor rock pile survey during the summer and have a report ready for the October Advisory Commission meeting. In the meantime, Eckert suggested that a statement regarding the poor rock piles be sent to local units of government, private owners, and anyone who has jurisdiction or is responsible for the depletion of the rock piles. Fiala was asked to prepare a letter for the signature of Chair Paul Lehto on behalf the Advisory Commission to be sent out. A motion was made by Larry Lankton and seconded by John Garber to accept the statement and notify local communities of the depletion of historically significant poor rock piles.

Lankton reported on the Keweenaw Heritage Center that is currently in the midst of fund raising for stabilization and restoration of St. Anne's Church where the heritage center is to be located. A planning grant from the Americana Foundation allowed for an architectural engineering study to be done on the church to see what work needs to be done regarding interior surfaces, exterior stabilization, modernization of utilities, installation of an elevator, and providing handicapped entries. The study showed that the approximate cost of this work would be \$500,000. The Americana Foundation planning grant aided significantly in applying for an Art, Cultural and Quality of Life grant through the Michigan Department of Budget for \$500,000 to help with the restoration.

Lankton will also be the speaker of a lectures series, "Four Evenings of Copper Country History," sponsored by the Keweenaw Heritage Center, KNHP, and WBKP. The money raised from the lecture series is to go toward the stain glass window restoration project at St. Anne's.

Initial planning has begun for the Keweenaw Heritage Center exhibit that is to be at St. Anne's Church. The exhibit is tentatively to be called Steeples and Storefronts: Life in the Mine Towns, according to Lankton. He added that he will be running a seminar class during spring quarter 1999, and the class project will help plan the St. Anne's exhibit.

There was brief discussion on a heritage corridor. Lankton noted that a Heritage Highway Corridor already exists on the Keweenaw, roughly from Cliff Mine up to Copper Harbor, and that such designations should be extended to other stretches of roadway here.

Kathryn Eckert spoke of Michigan's lighthouse project saying that the Corp of Engineers and the Bureau of Land Management are declaring 77 lighthouses on the Great Lakes Shoreline as surplus within the next two years. It is the goal of the Michigan Lighthouse Project to identify stewards for these orphan lighthouses. The Americana Foundation, The Michigan Historic Preservation Network, and the State Historic Preservation Office are collaborating by funding a position for a staff person to promote the reuse of these lighthouses.

Eckert distributed a copy of an announcement on efforts to preserve the cultural landscape at the Port Oneida Historic District that the park service owns. The park does not have the funds for its historic preservation; however, private partners will take over some of the historic farmsteads in Port Oneida in order to preserve them. She also recommended that people read an article published in a publication of Michigan Jewish History concerning Temple Jacob located in Hancock.

Eckert announced various meetings and workshops. The State Historic Preservation Network and the State Historic Preservation Office will be holding workshops in various parts of the state regarding the new state tax benefits for owners of historic properties. The Michigan Historic Preservation

Network's annual statewide meeting will take place in Monroe, Michigan, in March. The National Trust will hold its meeting in Washington, DC in October.

Eckert said she assumes there are projects in the Keweenaw that will or have already applied for official project status within the program, "Save America's Treasures." This status would aid locally in helping to raise money for historic preservation projects.

Reverend Robert Langseth said that First Lady, Hillary Clinton, is an advocate of historic preservation and has promoted the concept by going on many "Save America's Treasure's" tours. Reverend Langseth made a motion that the Advisory Commission make a request to U.S. Senator Carl Levin to invite Mrs. Clinton to KNHP as part of Save America's Treasure's" tours. John Garber seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Reverend Langseth commented on the new name plaques for the Advisory Commission, noting that they are very attractive. Fiala added that they were manufactured locally.

Reverend Langseth made a donation of historical material to the Calumet Library that he has collected over the years. Erik Nordberg of the MTU Archives said he has been working with the Calumet librarian to organize that material as well as materials brought in by other donors.

John Garber said he is very appreciative of the Park Service and Calumet Downtown Development Authority for providing the funding that brought Jane Busch to the area to begin her work on the Historic District Ordinance. Garber noted that the Isler Exhibit should be ready by June and will be exhibited in various places throughout the area. He added that Eugene LaRochelle of Calumet is spearheading this project. Garber also praised Joseph Mihal, who is on the Calumet Village Council and the Historic District Study Committee, and gave him special thanks for his continuous work toward historic preservation.

Clyde Raasio said that since this is his first meeting as an Advisory Commissioner, he is doing more listening than commenting. He said he would like to add that he, too, is concerned about the depletion of the poor rock piles. Raasio also said that once the snow disappears he will go out and visually look at the First Street road extension project on Quincy Hill in order to get a better perspective on that controversy.

Tom Nemacheck reported that there is a new tourism director for the state of Michigan and said that cultural tourism is very high with the state of Michigan's tourism office. That office feels that this is a very distinctive part of traveling in Michigan. Nemacheck added that the park is a very important part of Upper Peninsula travel and recreation. He often works with travel writers taking them on tours and feels that it would be excellent to have an interpretive person along to better explain the sites. These writers are interested in much more detail than sometimes can be provided especially with regard to cultural tourism.

Lankton mentioned to Nemacheck that he authored a guidebook called "Keweenaw Copper," that contains a cultural geography of the area. Lankton added that it might even be possible for someone from the Social Sciences Dept. (possible him) to volunteer to lead tours occasionally. Erik Nordberg suggested that Nemacheck talk to some of the folks attending today's meeting who might aid him in compiling a list of resource people to call upon to lead tours.

Chairman's Report

Paul Lehto made a brief report saying that flowers were sent on behalf of the Advisory Commission to Clarence Dwyer's funeral. Calumet Township is working on obtaining funding from the Department of Transportation in order to help with the purchase of the railroad depot. The township is also

working on acquiring the Swedetown cross-country ski trail and expects that to happen in the next few months.

Reports and Comments from the Legislative Staff

Amy Wisti of U.S. Congressman Bart Stupak's office congratulated the newly appointed Advisory Commissioners. She praised the efforts of everyone who worked on Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt's visit at the October 27, 1998 Advisory Commission meeting. Her office is following the situation regarding the First Street road extension project on Quincy Hill. She also said that there is much optimism in Congressman Stupak's office that the legislation will pass to give the KNHP Advisory Commission its operational powers.

Michelle McManus, Northern Michigan Representative of Governor John Engler, introduced herself as well as Michael Gokey, Deputy Northern Michigan Representative, also of the Governor's office. She explained that her office represents about 30 counties, which consists of all of the U.P. as well as the northern Lower Peninsula. McManus said her background is in state government and Gokey's is in banking. She spoke of wanting to open up the lines of communication between her office and the Advisory Commission and looks forward to becoming active with the commission.

Comments from the NPS Midwest Field Area Office

Al Hutchings, Associate Regional Director for Legislation and Policy, could not be at today's meeting due to another commitment, but will be attending the June meeting.

Comments from the Public

Sue Cone spoke of the Pine Street historic corridor grant funds that are being applied for through the Department of Transportation. The village is applying for additional funding to pave, in brick, the 300 block on Fifth Street and to continue the historic lighting project on Sixth Street.

Owner of the Union building in Calumet, Ray Ostermyer, spoke of the sale of that building. He said that if he sells to a private individual, he would do this with deep regret because he would like to see the park get the building. He explained, however, that the park could only offer him the appraised value, which is considerably lower than offers he has received from other prospective buyers. Ostermyer said that he must sell the building for more than the appraised value in order to protect his financial interests.

Richard Dana of Calumet spoke of Coppertown U.S.A. saying that it is "alive and running." There is enough money to hire Joseph Mihal to help run the place. Dana reminded people that there is a rather large project in the old pattern storage building where there are about 5,000 to 10,000 patterns that need to be organized. The roof needs repair work done on it, too. The paperwork is being processed to transfer the ownership of the Eagle Harbor Light Station over to the Keweenaw County Historical Society. Recently a blacksmith shop located near the Phoenix Church that dates to the turn-of-the-century was donated to the Keweenaw County Historical Society. The Sierra Club will be in the area this summer to help with the restoration of a coast guard lifeboat which had been brought from a museum in Duluth a number of years ago. The historical society recently published a book on Central Mine history. The funds from sales of the publication will go into restoration going on there. According to Dana, the primary plan at Central Mine is to create a walking tour and visitor's center there.

Erik Nordberg made several announcements. He invited people to come to the Archives to view models of mining company housing recently done by undergraduate students of Professor Kim Hoagland's Social Sciences architectural history class. The Friends of the Van Pelt Library recently funded travel grants to be awarded by the MT Archives. The travel grants are intended to encourage people to visit the area and use the MTU archives and help spread the word of the history of Keweenaw. Professor Bill Mulligan of Kentucky is a recipient of one of the grants. He is conducting

research on Irish immigrants in the U.P. Another grant recipient is linguistics Professor Beth Simon from Fort Wayne, Indiana, who is conducting research on the shift from original language to English in the copper districts. Nordberg also mentioned that a local Houghton branch of the Church of Jesus Christ and Latter Day Saints is in the final stages of establishing a family history center.

Larry Lankton made a resolution that the commission passed, thanking Lisa Dwyer for her continuing service as Recording Secretary these past several years.

The remaining Advisory Commission meeting dates for 1999 are:

8:30 a.m., Tuesday, June 8, 1999

8:30 a.m., Tuesday, August 24, 1999

8:30 a.m., Tuesday, October 26, 1999

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 10:40 a.m.